

Cutter Speeding Plane Crash Survivors To San Francisco

Waiting for Plane To Crash-Land on Ocean Said 'Tough'

San Francisco — U.P. — The Coast Guard cutter Ponchartrain sped toward San Francisco today with 31 persons who survived the crash-landing of a luxury Pan American World Airways stratoclipper at sea.

The Ponchartrain took the 24 passengers and seven crewmen aboard after the \$1.5 million plane pancaked into the ocean 1045 miles southwest of San Francisco Tuesday. Two of the plane's four motors had gone out.

The rescue itself took only 21 minutes. It was carried out with incredible smoothness. Five persons suffered minor hurts.

Capt. William K. Earle, skipper of the Ponchartrain, said waiting for the plane to crash-land proved to be the "toughest thing" of the whole operation.

"We were at our rescue stations and on the alert for five hours," he said.

Passengers Calm
But the passengers on the plane, once they got over their initial nervousness, were calm. They credited their captain, Richard Ogg, and the crew for making the whole thing seem "routine."

Ogg put it simply: "There was no alternative but to ditch. There was no panic and the operation was orderly throughout. Some of us got our feet wet, but not one was actually in the water."

But to Richard Gordon of Silver Springs, Md., and his wife, Jane, it was more than a routine operation.

"Ogg and the crew were wonderful," Gordon said. "If it had not been for their calming manner, I don't see how he could have done as well as we did."

Gordon said he, his wife, and their 2½-year-old twin girls, Maureen and Elizabeth, were asleep at the time.

Praises Passengers
Mary E. Daniel, one of three stewardesses aboard, praised the passengers in turn for "obeying orders and doing everything we asked."

Asked what the passengers did while waiting to ditch, she said:

"They asked questions. They sat around and thought up more pertinent questions . . . they were very relaxed and well-behaved."

The Stratoclipper began having trouble with its engines shortly after 3 a.m. (PST). At that time, the plane had reached the point of no return on its flight from Honolulu to San Francisco. The flight had originated in Tokyo on Monday.



AIRLINES TRAINING PAYS OFF—Under the split-second control of Captain Richard Ogg (lower right) of Saratoga, Calif., the big-four engine Pan American Airways Stratoclipper (above) crippled by propeller trouble, came down in the Pacific Ocean 1045 miles from Honolulu alongside the U. S. Coast Guard cutter Ponchartrain. Emergency training of the airline's crew and the crew aboard the Ponchartrain paid off in a dramatic sea rescue that saw all 31 persons aboard the plane rescued with a few suffering only minor injuries. At lower left is Patricia Reynolds of San Mateo, Calif., purser aboard the plane.



HIS PRAYER ANSWERED—Ray Dami of Oakland is near the breaking point at San Francisco's International Airport as he waits for word of his wife, Ruby, who was a passenger aboard Pan American Airways Stratoclipper that ditched in the Pacific Ocean midway between Honolulu and San Francisco. The plane's captain brought the big ship down alongside the U. S. Coast Guard weather ship Ponchartrain which rescued all 31 persons aboard the plane with only minor injuries reported.

Passengers Praise Stratoclipper Pilot

San Bruno, Calif.—U.P.—The passengers who survived the ditching of a Pan American Stratoclipper 1,000 miles out to sea Tuesday, were lavish with their praise of Capt. Richard Ogg, but the veteran pilot treated the dramatic crash-landing and rescue almost as routine.

Ogg, from Saratoga, Calif., told dispassionately of the landing at sea in a matter-of-fact voice during a radio interview with newsmen over a thousand miles of water from the Coast Guard cutter Ponchartrain.

"We had mechanical difficulty and were unable to hold our 21,000 foot altitude. It was impossible to reach either Honolulu or the mainland," he said.

"There was no alternative but to ditch. There was no panic and the operation was orderly throughout. Some of us got our feet wet, but no one was actually in the water."

"We had a job to do and it had to be done right or else. Our action was clearly indicated."

Asked how the three children among the passengers took the ditching, Ogg said:

"They are asleep now. I guess that is good testimony."

To Richard Gordon, Silver Springs, Md., and his wife, Jane, however, it was more than just a job to do.

"Ogg and the crew were wonderful," Gordon said. "If it had not been for their calming manner I don't see how we could have done as well as we did."

The Gordons were returning from the Philippines with their twin daughters, Maureen and Elizabeth, 2½ years old. Gordon is a U.S. Information Service official in Manila and is returning on leave after two years overseas.

No Panic By Passengers
"My wife and I and the kids were asleep. Then we heard this strange noise from the engines and woke up," Gordon said.

"We were told that something was wrong but we didn't know what. Shortly Capt. Ogg came in and said they were having difficulty with the propellers and would have to ditch, but things were under control and a cutter was waiting nearby. We were asked to stay in our seats and put on our life belts and fasten our safety belts. I fastened my safety belt, and I had a feeling that we would come out of it safely."

"The babies were upset. They did not know what was wrong except that their sleep was being disturbed so they acted up a bit."

Mrs. Louise Walker, 58, Oakland, returning on the last leg of a four-month world tour, also commented on the crew's calmness.

Crew Receives Praise
"At no time was there any alarm," Mrs. Walker said. "They assured us we would be safe and that the water was calm. At no time were we afraid that our lives would be lost."

Mary E. Daniel, one of the three stewardesses aboard, helped guide the passengers through the rear exit where they dropped into the rafts.

"We had an excellent group of passengers and they obeyed orders and did everything they were asked. We went out the rear exit and everything went smoothly. There was a four or five foot drop to the rafts but as the plane settled the rafts got closer."

Asked what the passengers did during the long, tense wait, she said:

"They asked questions. They sat around and thought up more pertinent questions. The navigator (Second Officer Richard L. Brown, Belmont, Calif.) and the engineer (Frank Garcia, Mountain View, Calif.) came back and the passengers asked them more questions. The passengers were very relaxed and well-behaved."

Grange Notes

Shady Cove Grange
The Shady Cove Grange met Oct. 10. Mrs. Thelma Rynning and Mrs. Ted Conway received the obligation in the first and second degrees.

Phil Motschenbacher spoke on community service and how to control juvenile delinquency.

Secretary Annaburl Kee stated a meeting will be held at the Grants Pass library Oct. 25 for the purpose of discussing flood control.

Oct. 27 the Pomona Grange will meet at 10 a.m. for an all day meeting. Judging of the white sugar jellies and fruit contest and election of officers for the next two years will be part of the business for the day.

Members are reminded that the meeting of Nov. 14 will be for election of officers for the coming year.

During the lecture hour Mrs. Reed, Mrs. McKay, Mrs. Littlefield and Mrs. Kee told of their most embarrassing moments. Games were also played.

The Grange will hold a benefit card party for the Shady Cove-Trail fire department Oct. 20, at 8 p.m. A program of local talent is planned. Refreshments will be served.

The next regular Grange meeting will be a social evening, Oct. 24. A potluck dinner will be served at 7 p.m. and Miss Ann Forbes will show color slides of Egypt, Syria and Palestine. The public is invited.

Medford Man Arrested In California Friday
William Raymond Pickett, 28, 233 South Riverside ave., Medford, was arrested last Friday in Tulelake, Calif., by city police there and returned to Jackson county jail on charges of obtaining money under false pretenses, according to Medford police.

Pickett will appear in circuit court tomorrow. He waived extradition in district court Monday.

He was arrested following complaints from Gerald Wayne True, of the Northern Piggy Wiggly company, 528 South Riverside ave., Medford, and Homer A. Sullivan, of the Central Market, 437 South Central ave., Medford, involving checks.

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20. at 8 p.m. A program of local talent is planned. Refreshments will be served.

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Rescue Crew Determined

En Route to San Francisco—U.P.—Capt. William K. Earle, skipper of the Coast Guard cutter Ponchartrain, said today his crew showed a "burning determination" to rescue all the passengers and crew aboard a crippled Pan American Airways plane.



Snider's

"They would not be satisfied with anything less," Earle said in a radio interview. "I have great pride in these men."

Every one of the 31 passengers and crew was taken aboard the Ponchartrain after the Stratoclipper ditched in the Pacific 1,045 miles southwest of San Francisco Tuesday.

Earle singled out Machinist's Mate 2-C Ronald Christian of Los Angeles for special praise.

"The plane was sinking and we did not know for sure that everybody was off. We were worried that it would sink with someone still aboard."

"This man volunteered to go into the plane and check. He got out of his motorboat and went into the plane. He cruised around in there and found that there was nobody left."

"It was dangerous since the plane was sinking. I think he showed great courage."

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